



# Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **TAMPA GANG MEMBER SENTENCED TO 37 MONTHS ON FEDERAL DRUG CHARGES**

Tampa, FL - Today, U.S. District Judge Susan C. Bucklew sentenced Dondi Hendricks, age 21, to 37 months' imprisonment for distribution of crack cocaine. Hendricks pleaded guilty to those charges on September 21, 2007. Hendricks is one of the 14 individuals associated with the "Kuntry Boys" who was indicted in June of this year when a total of 58 gang members were rounded up by local, state, and federal law enforcement officers. So far eight of the 14 individuals arrested on federal charges have pled guilty. One defendant was convicted at trial and two others are set for trial. Three defendants' cases are pending. Hendricks is the second individual to be sentenced. Several of those who have pled guilty are scheduled to be sentenced during the next few months.

U.S. Attorney Robert E. O'Neill stated, "We are united with our law enforcement partners from the local, state and federal level in our effort to rid our communities of gangs."

"The gangs in Hillsborough County are learning quickly that our team of hardworking law enforcement deputies, officers, and federal agents are sending gang members to gated communities called federal and state prison," stated Hillsborough County Sheriff David Gee.

The Law Enforcement agencies participating in the crackdown on gang activity are: The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, the Tampa Police Department, the Hillsborough County State Attorney's Office, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF), U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). This case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Walter E. Furr.

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**Background Information on \$2.5 grant that was awarded to Tampa back in March 2006 to Combat Gang Activity**

The Attorney General's strategy to combat gangs, which directed the development of this new initiative, is two-fold: First, prioritize prevention programs to provide America's youth, as well as offenders returning to the community, with opportunities that help them resist gang involvement. Second, ensure robust enforcement policies when gang-related violence does occur. Accordingly, each U.S. Attorney in the selected areas will work with state, local and community partners to implement strategies that address the following areas:

- *Prevention* – The Department will make available approximately \$1 million in grants per community to support comprehensive prevention efforts such as the Gang Reduction Program, which focuses on reducing youth-gang crime and violence by addressing the full range of personal, family and community factors that contribute to juvenile delinquency and gang activity.
- *Enforcement* – The Department will make available approximately \$1 million in grants per community to help support enforcement programs that will focus law enforcement efforts on the most significant violent gang offenders.
- *Prisoner Re-entry* – The Department will make available approximately \$500,000 per community to create re-entry assistance programs that will provide transitional housing, job readiness and placement assistance, and substance abuse and mental health treatment to prisoners re-entering society.